INVESTIGATION INTO THE ALLEGED MURDER OF SRI T. SIDDARAJU AT ABBI FALLS IN MERCARA.

*Q. 33. Sri K. P. KARUMBAYYA (Virajpet).—

Will the Government be pleased to state .—

(*a*) whether they have received any representation regarding the alleged murder of one Sri T. Siddaraju, who had gone to Abbi Falls, which is 5 miles away from Mercara on 3rd December 1960 ;

(*b*) whether it is a fact that one Ramamurthy, a step-brother of the deceased who went to the Abbi Falls in a Jeep on 3rd December 1960 reported to the Police on 4th December 1960 that the *late* Siddaraju was drowned the previous day at 3 P.M. in the Abbi Falls and if so, at what time the report was made to the Police on 4th December 1960 ;

(*c*) whether it is a fact that thorough search was made on 4th December 1960 and 5th December 1960 by swimmers and divers in the Abbi Falls, which is only about 12 feet deep and 40 square feet in area in the presence of the Police and the Police withdrew their watch from Abbi Falls on the evening of 5th December 1960 as no dead body was traceable in the Falls ;

(*d*) whether it is a fact that the Police did not suspect aforesaid Ramamurthy and his associates of anything foul in the death of Siddaraju, in spite of written complaint by the wife of the deceased alleging family fued, etc., and she suspected them of murdering her husband ;

(*e*) whether it is a fact that a news given currency to by Ramamurthy and his associates on 6th December 1960 that Siddaraju's body would be found floating in the same Abbi Falls on 7th December 1960 forenoon was conveyed to the Police on 6th December 1960 itself and if so the action taken by the Police thereon ;

A.—Sri H. M. CHANNABASAPPA (Minister for Home).—

(*a*) Yes.

(*b*) On 4th December 1960 at 8 A.M. Ramamurthy lodged a complaint with the Mercara Taluk Police to the effect that on the previous day his step brother Siddaraju was drowned in the Abbi Falls.

(*c*) It is not correct to say that the depth and area are 12 feet and 40 square feet respectively. At Abbi Falls, the water falls down from a height of about 80 feet and it collects in an area of about 40' x 100'. The place is rocky and there are deep crevices in the rock. The water at the bottom of the Falls is very deep and it is not possible to reach the bottom. Besides there is strong current in the area.

From the time the incident was reported till the body was recovered, the Police made ceaseless efforts with the help of local swimmers and divers to locate the body. It is not correct to say that the Police withdrew their watch from the Falls on the evening of 5th December 1960.

(*d*) The complaint of Smt. Damayanthi, wife of the deceased was enquired into. Although there were some family disputes between the deceased on the one hand and his brothers on the other, they were not so serious as would lead to the commission of a crime of murder against the deceased. The activities and subsequent conduct of Ramamurthy and his associates, *viz.*, Thimaraju, Harun and one Venkappa Rai, who had also accompanied the deceased to the Abbi Falls on 3rd December 1960 for the purpose of fishing were under close and unobstrusive watch, but nothing suspicious was found. On certain objections by the wife of the deceased at the cremation ground, the viscera of the deceased were sent to the Chemical Examiner in order to see whether there was any poison, but the opinion of the Chemical Examiner since received has ruled out the possibility of the deceased having been poisoned to death.

(*e*) No such news was conveyed to the Police.

Sri K. P. KARUMBAYYA.—Is it not a fact that the body of one T. Siddaraju was discovered for the first time on the 7th morning by his cousin brother ?

†Sri H. M. CHANNABASAPPA.—It is a fact that the body was recovered from the Abbi Falls.

Sri K. P. KARUMBAYYA.—Is it a fact that the police were not on the spot on the 7th morning when the body was discovered ?

Sri H. M. CHANNABASAPPA.—It is clear from the answer that the police were keeping a watch over these things.

Sri K. P. KARUMBAYYA.—Is it not a fact that the body was discovered for the first time on the morning of 7th December ?

Sri H. M. CHANNABASAPPA.—The report says so.

Sri G. N. PUTTANNA.—When the body was found on the 7th morning, the report says that the head was sent to the Chemical Analyser 5 days later.

Sri B. D. JATTI.—May I know whether it is possible to have a *post mortem* without finding out the dead body ?

Sri G. N. PUTTANNA.—That is exactly what I am coming to. There is five days' delay. Siddaraju was stated to have been drowned on 3rd December. The body was found and viscera was sent for chemical examination on the next day. So, there is a delay of five days. What is the result of chemical examination about the viscera found in the stomach of the diseased ?

Sri H. M. CHANNABASAPPA.—I must ask the Chemical Examiner as to what all he examined. He has made a Report and the report is there was no poison or anything abnormal found there.

Sri C. K. RAJAIAH SHETTY.—When the wife of the diseased demanded the dead body after *post mortem* what is the special reason for the Police to hand over the body to the cousin of the diseased ?

Sri H. M. CHANNABASAPPA.—Because he was a male member, in the presence of the wife, the body was handed over/with the consent of the parties concerned.

Sri C. K. RAJAIAH SHETTY.—Is the Government aware that the body was given to the very man on whom there was suspicion and it was reported by the wife that they were the persons who were suspected ?

Sri H. M. CHANNABASAPPA.—The body was given to the brother-in-law and not to the brother.

Sri G. N. PUTTANNA.—In answer to (c), it has been stated that there is a strong current in the area. I think the Government is aware that during December, there will be no rains in Coorg and Malnad area and the current of water flowing there is very much less. What was the reason for that man to give information to the Police on the 4th morning at 8O'clock though that place is within a distance of five miles that Siddaraju was drawn ?

Sri H. M. CHANNABASAPPA.—The information was given to all the relatives on the 3rd itself. The wife was not there. She was sent for from a distant place. On the 4th morning, the report was with the Police. It was only subsequent to that time that police come into the picture. What were all the circumstances that were responsible for the delay in giving information is a different matter altogether. The police had taken prompt action immediately after information was given to them.

Sri C. J. MUCKANNAPPA.—May I know who gave the information to Sri Ramamurthy that his brother-in-law Siddaraju was just drowned at Abbi Falls ?

Sri H. M. CHANNABASAPPA.—Ramamurthy himself was present when he was drowned.

Sri C. J. MUCKANNAPPA.—Who gave the information that Siddaraju was drowned on 3rd December ?

Sri H. M. CHANNABASAPPA.—Ramamurthy himself gave the complaint to the Police on 4th morning at 8-00 A.M.

Sri C. J. MUCKANNAPPA.—Will it not lead to suspicion that Ramamurthy and Siddaraju were there together ?

Sri H. M. CHANNABASAPPA.—Ramamurthy was there and Siddaraju was also there and a couple of others also were there.

Sri C. J. MUCKANNAPPA.—What is the action the Government or Police have taken against Ramamurthy to cull out the truth ?

Sri H. M. CHANNABASAPPA.—Unless Ramamurthy is found to have committed murder or done anything, action cannot be taken against an honest man.

Sri M. C. NARASIMHAN.—Is it not a fact that complaints were made about the veracity of the investigations carried on by the Doctor who conducted the *post mortem* against the Police ?

Sri H. M. CHANNABASAPPA.—Some complaints were made not by the Doctor or anybody but by the public. Some public leader made a complaint questioning the veracity etc., and the Government have taken all possible care to see that even disinterested persons have been deputed at high level and the entire investigation has been examined at every stage and the Government are satisfied that investigation has been done on very correct lines and sound lines.

Sri K. P. KARUMBAYYA —Will a copy of the *post mortem* of the dead body was made by the Doctor for the first time, be laid on the Table of the House ?

Sri H. M. CHANNABASAPPA.—I have to examine the propriety or otherwise of laying it on the table.

Sri K. P. KARUMBAYYA.—Is it a fact that the Doctor who visited the spot and saw the dead body for the first time remarked that it looked that the life had been extinct only within 24 hours ?

Sri H. M. CHANNABASAPPA.—If there is any remark which he wanted to make, he will have put on record. We will examine the propriety or otherwise of laying it on the Table.

WORK LOAD AND WORK PROGRAMME OF THE P. W. D. SUB-DIVISION, HOLALKERE.

* *Q.*—336. Sri G. SIVAPPA (Chitradurga).—

Will the Government be pleased to state.—

(*a*) what is the work load and work programme of the P. W. D. Sub-Division, Holalkere and the area ;

(*b*) whether it is not a fact that the Assistant Engineer, P.W.D. Sub-Division, Holalkere, is looking after the two taluks being the biggest P.W.D. Sub-Division in the District ;

(*c*) what is the work load and work programme of each taluk ;

(*d*) whether there are no representations in this matter by the people of the Taluk to sanction a separate P.W.D. Sub-Division for Holalkere Taluk ?

A.—Sri M. N. NAGHNOOR (Deputy Minister for Public Works).—

(*a*) Work load is 11.58 lakhs, *vide* Statement 'A'. Work programme is given in Statements 'B' and 'C'. Area 933 Sq. miles. (Statement A, 'B' and 'C' are placed on the Table of the House).

(*b*) Yes.

(*c*)	*Holalkere Taluk*	*Hosadurga Taluk*
Work load.	Rs. 5.46 lakhs.	Rs. 6.12 lakhs.

Work Programme. *vide* Statements "B" and "C" placed on the Table of the House.

(*d*) Some representations have been received.